

2017 - LIFELINE REPORT: THE TRAM EXPERIENCE

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I'm sitting on a typical old tram [like] you find all around central Milan when out of nowhere I hear a call. It's like a pull that shifts my focus inward, a force that pushes me to let myself go. I'm traveling through the middle of the city and I'm surrounded by distractions; I can see bright lights and hear the loud noises of the hustle and bustle of the surroundings.

This will never work! I say to myself.

In spite of this, I cover my head with the hood of my sweatshirt, let it fall back against the window, close my eyes and let myself go. I concentrate on my breathing and search for a path to reach at least Focus 10.

In a flash I'm thrown into my 'special place. I'm surprised and amazed but don't quite know why I'm here. Have I arrived in Focus 27 already? So fast?

I look around for confirmation and try and see if there is anything strange or out of place, but find nothing. My house is just as I've left it, atop a rock on a mountain facing the sea, and everything else looks like it always does.

I'm in Focus 27! I never thought I'd get here so fast, yet it's happening.

I'm conscious I'll have to get off the tram soon and I don't want to waste this unique opportunity. A sense of urgency comes over me: I have to do something.

Why don't I work on the house a bit? I think. Make changes, update some architectural elements, it's a great exercise to develop creativity and put yourself on the path to make things happen. Besides, I already had some changes in mind.

I spend what feels like a very long time on this activity. I don't know exactly how much, but it was probably no more than two tram stops.

Time seems expanded, like something that's detached from me. It feels like I'm not part of it but at the same time, I could manipulate and expand it at will.

Once I finished with the changes I go out onto the terrace overlooking the sea, and I rise up in the air to watch the house from above.

It looks good! A great job, I have to admit. I chuckle in satisfaction.

My eyes are suddenly drawn to the sea where I can see a cargo ship on fire tilted to one side, with the bow submerged. It's the same ship I saw during my first Lifeline on a walk I took in Focus 23. On that occasion I was told that I would be going on that ship "later." That time had arrived after more than a month of waiting.

This is the reason why I've been called here!

I see Daniel, a guide I met during that last Lifeline, flying over the ship looking towards me impatiently, as though he'd been expecting me. How long has he been there? And how long has it been since the ship caught fire? I wonder to myself.

I wasted so much time rearranging the house and Daniel had been there waiting the whole time. I immediately reach him and together we hover about fifty meters above sea level. As I stare at him trying to think of something to say, he gestures towards the ship below us. His eyes seem to be saying: "You have work to do!"

I look at the damaged ship and then back at him. Down in the sea I see men who are drowning. I can't waste any more time, what do I do now?

An image of a large net made of unrefined thick ropes comes into my mind, as if it were some kind of epiphany, an idea not conjured entirely on my own. The next moment I see the net I had just imagined weaving itself into existence, right underneath me.

With a wave of my hand I cast the net into the water. Using my mind and my hands, I maneuver the net under the surface of the sea and reach for the drowning men. I clench my fists to close the net and lift it out of the water like a sack. Eight men have been caught and I free them quickly. The ship is still on fire and I can't take the time to explain the situation in great detail.

You have all passed away. Everything will be explained later, but right now I need your help. I feel sorry about the callous way in which I deliver the tragic news, but time is not on our side. Besides, I feel my energy fading and I need these eight men to help me complete what I was called here to do; there are others in danger who must be rescued immediately. I'm also conscious I have to get off the tram soon!

With a gesture of my hands I push the eight men in position above the ship. Again, I feel that this isn't my idea, but it's still through me that everything is happening. I feel like I am part of something bigger. A small part working in unison.

We have now formed a circle and from every person I see a stream of energy projecting towards the center, it seems to be made of braided rope, like the one that formed the net. If you looked at the circle from above, it would resemble a wheel and each stream of energy, the spokes. The streams of energy meet in the middle and form a more powerful beam that projects down towards the ship. When the beam strikes the surface of the sea, a wall of water rises and wraps the ship like a veil, helping to tame the fire. Steam starts to rise up in the air and the fire begins to fade gradually, until it is completely extinguished.

A little more effort! Just a little more effort, guys!

We have to secure the ship now so we lift it out of the water from Focus 23 and lay it safely on the beach in Focus 27: two continuous places that are closely related. With the ship secured, the eight men and I slowly hover down to beach-level where other men are coming out of the damaged ship with a puzzled look.

On the other end of the beach, women are coming out of the lush vegetation. They have tanned skin, long black hair, big flowers placed behind their ears and are dressed in colorful robes. They are here to welcome the newcomers and help them in this difficult moment. I see them hugging and greeting the men and whispering words of comfort. After a few moments together, all the men are led away by the women into the lush vegetation.

Ok that's it! I think to myself. I'm relieved.

I rise up in the air, spot Daniel and join him. As I am approaching him, I see that he is smiling and giving me the thumbs up. "I must go now, Daniel. Everything is sorted. I'm still on a tram ... and I'm coming to my stop!"

Wait, what, my stop?!

In that moment I realize that I have been totally conscious of myself throughout this whole journey. I knew exactly where I was, stop after stop, along the whole tram route without even opening my eyes. Not only was I aware of my exact location on the route, I was also conscious of the recorded voice signalling the various stops. I was able to sense and perceive myself in different places at the same time.

I could perceive myself sitting with the head leaning against the window, sweatshirt hood pulled down over my eyes, fully aware of the people that were walking beside me on the tram. But I was also with Daniel to fight a ship fire in Focus 23. I was with the tram, and with every single person traveling on it. Every version of my perception was almost independent from the other but existed simultaneously.

Once again I switch my attention back to Focus 27. Daniel is still there: "Well, I'm off! I'm really going now. Bye Daniel!"

As I open my eyes for the first time since I was pulled into Focus 27, I feel Daniel's love powerfully striking me in the chest. I feel all the scattered pieces of my consciousness gather back together in an instant. I'm back in the present. My stop approaches, I get up and the tram doors open in perfect timing a few seconds later.

FIRST RETRIEVAL

I'm immersed in the three-dimensional blackness, the starting point of all of my exercises. In the stillness before me, I suddenly start to think about my great-

grandmother who died 18 years prior. It seems that this thought had been waiting for the right opportunity to manifest: For some days now, her memory had been coming back to me.

I think about her name and repeat it a few times in my mind--"Ida! Ida!"--and wait. The grainy blackness in front of my eyes starts to fade and, to my amazement, a typical scene from my adolescence appears: I see my great-grandmother in the hall of the country house. She is there, sitting on the chair where she used to spend the whole day whispering to herself.

In her old age she gradually became isolated in her world of mutterings and prayers, and the interactions with the rest of the family with whom she lived were increasingly difficult and rare. I, too, found it difficult to relate to her whenever I went to the country house for a visit.

I walk over and I stop half a meter in front of her. She has not noticed me yet so I stay silent and still. I leave it to her to realize my presence. I choose to be gentle in my approach. Shortly after, I see her awaken from her isolation. She looks up towards me and screams with broken voice filled with fear: "What are you doing here?!" Her reaction touches me and almost makes me smile: "What do you mean what am I doing here? I came to visit you, didn't I?" I say.

She turns to check the hallway as though she's making sure no one else is there. I follow her gaze and realise that the corridor does not actually lead anywhere: a few meters ahead everything vanishes into thin air.

In a glimpse I see this whole scene from afar and it is like my great-grandmother spent all these years alone on a small asteroid plunged into the void.

We have to get out of here right away. But how?

And as if someone or something listened to my plea, a spherical shape made of light appears from nowhere and comes between us, connecting us to it through beams of light. A rush of memories suddenly comes over me: I see now that after her death, my great-grandmother spent all of her time sitting here, alone and absorbed in herself, strengthening the feeling of isolation.

I ask her: "Don't you want to get away from here, take a walk and meet someone else?"

Her face seems to lighten up. I suddenly see that her body is morphing from her current old, tired one into a younger one from the past. It's flashing between those two states in rapid succession.

"Yes! it would be nice. I would... I would like to sing," she replies.

Sing??! I think, puzzled. What does she mean?

I begin to lose contact with this scene because I'm thinking too much and the rational part of me is shutting it down: it wants me to wake up.

Do I tell her or not she died 18 years ago? This is the question. I try to let go and I turn my attention to her again.

I do not want to lose her now!

In one breath I blurt out, almost without thinking: "Many years have passed since the day you died. It's time to go!"

She stares back at me for few seconds and just replies: "Ok... fine!"

Fine? She already knew it! I think the sphere of light had already informed her of this fact, as well as it had with me.

"Good. Then let's go! Hold my hand, we have to move upwards. I Suddenly it occurs to me that Robert Monroe did the same thing in his books.

This is actually my first retrieval. I must copy. This thought almost makes me smile.

At the moment she grabs my hand we immediately rise up in the air, passing through the ceiling first and then coming out of the roof of the country house. As I rise above the house, I try to picture the Park in my mind. I would like to take her there, it is the best thing to do, but I realize I do not know exactly how to get there.

I am totally unprepared, and I have never been to the Park before. Never done any retrieval before. Oh dear...

We are about 10 meters above the house when we start to lose altitude: we get pulled down into another building that is just a few meters away from my great grandmother's house (this building did not actually exist as her house was in an isolated part of the countryside).

We pass through the roof once more and land softly in what appears to be a waiting room. Everything here is white. Ida sits immediately on the only available chair just few meters away from a door, while I stand beside her, a bit confused. She seems to have forgotten my presence already.

At this point she has completely abandoned the appearance of a 90-year-old woman and now looks as though she is in her 30s. I can hear her humming to herself excitedly about what is going to happen. Serenity radiates from her face. She is a completely new person. The door opens and a woman dressed in white peers out to address Ida:

"We will receive you in 10 minutes. She then turns to me and adds: "You can go now," and promptly goes back into her room, closing the door behind her.

Where are we? I ask myself.

I have a strong doubt not because I think there is some kind of danger, but mainly because I do not know what this place is. The scene is slowly fading away and I feel powerless because I can't stop it.

I am sucked into the pitch black.

Shortly after I found myself flying above some woods, grazing the dense treetops. This should be the Park, if I'm not mistaken. Have I reached it then?

I decide to land immediately to explore the woods on foot. Once on the ground I walk through the trees for a while until the land starts to become steep. I feel the urge to find a low branch and climb up a tree: I need to orientate and to see exactly where I should go from above the treetops.

Why didn't I do it a while ago when I was flying? I don't know...

When I reached the peak of the slope, I finally find the right tree. I climb it until I reach the top. I turn around and see that 50 meters behind me, there stands the building where I left my great grandmother.

So, in the end have I brought her to the Park? I am not sure. This is the last thing I see before drifting into sleep.